Mr. Hunn was in early life, as I have heard, in the army. He afterwards took orders, & in 1790, was presented by the Duke of Chandos, to the Vicarage of Debenham. Here he continued till 1822, when he seceded from the church, resigned his living, & retired to Woodbridge, where he has fitted up a chapel for the purpose of promulgating his religious opinions.

In his farewell Sermon at Debenham, he told his audience that he did not approve of certain parts of the church service: & his induction to the living, he felt qualms & scruples that he never could fairly digest: — yet for 32 years did he enjoy its emoluments, — omitting, & adding to the different parts of the Service, as he thought proper: of late the greater part of the Litany has been left out, & only part of the Belief would his conscience allow him to read.

At the conclusion of his Sermon, he hoped God would forgive him his hypocrisy; in which our Christian charity will induce us to join; tho' it appears almost impossible for a man to have just views of the Divine precepts contained in the Bible, who could for so long a time make a sacrifice of his principles.

Mr. Hunn is the author of several other single Sermons. for two of which, See Sermons, 2. No. 14. & 15.

The 1st preached at Norwich, 17 Oct. 1790,

The other, at Stowmarket, 7 March 1790.

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PREPARATION FOR DEATH,

STATED FROM

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES,

AND THE REALITY OF DIVINE CONSOLATIONS,

ATTESTED IN

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT DEBENHAM, FEB. 26, 1792,

On occasion of the sudden but remarkably triumphant departure of

WILLIAM PATRICK.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED SOME

LYRIC VERSES,

ENTITLED,

LAUGHTER IN DEATH.

By W. HURN,

VICAR OF DEBENHAM, AND CHAPLAIN TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS DOWAGER OF CHANDOS.

Declare His doings among the people—To the praise of the glory of his grace, Is. xii. 4. Eph. i. 6.

O, Death!—The voice of my beloved! Behold, he cometh, leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. 1. Cor. xv. 55. Song of Songs, ii. 8.

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The following Hymns which were ſung, one before, and the other after the Sermon, are taken from a pleaſing publication entitled "Sion's Songs, or Hymns" by the Rev. Mr. Berridge, Vicar of Everton, price 2s. 6d.

Hymn 1ſt. On the death of a Believer. Rev. xiv. 13.

I.

O happy ſoul, who ſafely paſt
Thy weary warfare here,
Arriv'd at Jeſu's ſeat at laſt,
And ended all thy care.

II.

No more ſhall ſickneſs break thy reſt,
Or pain create thee ſmart;
No more ſhall doubts diſturb thy breaſt,
Or ſin afflict thine heart.

III.

No more the world on thee ſhall frown,
No longer Satan roar;
Thy *man* of *ſin* is broken down,
And ſhall torment no more.

IV.

Adieu, vain world, the ſpirit cries,
All tears are wip'd away;
My Jeſus fills my cup with joys,
And fills it every day.

V.

A taſte of love we get below,
To chear a pilgrim's face;
But every ſaint muſt die to know
The feaſt of heavenly grace.

VI.

Delightful concord always reigns
In Jeſu's courts above!
There hymns are ſung in rapt'rous ſtrains,
With ceaſeleſs joy and love.

Hymn

Hymn 2d. On the triumphant death of a Believer. 1. Cor. xv. 55.

I.

At length he bow'd his dying head,
And guardian Angels come;
The ſpirit dropt it's clay and fled,
Fled off triumphant home.

II.

An awful, yet a glorious ſight
To ſee believers die!
They ſmile, and bid the world good night,
And take their flight on high.

III.

No guilty pangs becloud the face,
No horrors make them weep;
Held up and chear'd by Jeſu's grace,
They ſweetly fall aſleep.

IV.

On death they caſt a wiſhful eye,
When Jeſus bids them ſing,
O grave, where is thy victory?
O death, where is thy ſting?

V.

Releas'd from ſin and ſorrow here,
Their conflict now is o'er;
And feaſted well with heavenly cheer,
They live to die no more.

VI.

So may I learn by grace to live,
And die in Jeſus too;
Then will my ſoul that reſt receive,
Which all his people do.

A SERMON.

MATT. xxiv. 44.

Be ye also ready: for in such an Hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.

DEATH, not merely in itself, but chiefly in its consequences, is of all evils the most terrible to those who are not ready to meet it with the preparation which is required in scripture. And hence we read of many, who *through fear of Death were all their life time subject to bondage.* Heb. ii. 15. But, blessed be GOD! we there read also of an Almighty Redeemer, who in love to *the children* GOD *had given him, partook of their flesh and blood, that through death, He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil,* and *deliver them* from all the horrors connected with it. *The sting of death is sin. The strength of sin is the law,* which by its righteous curses fastens deserved condemnation on every transgressor; and hence through sin the devil gets his power. *But blessed be* GOD, *who giveth us the victory* over them all, *through our* LORD JESUS CHRIST! Of all enquiries then

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that can be ſtarted by thoughtful men, this is of moſt immediate concern to us: what knowledge have we of this glorious deliverer, and our obligations to Him? What is our perſonal experience of that victory which He obtained *for* his people, and accompliſhes *within* them? Who amongſt us has ſo felt the power of Chriſt's redemption as to be at full liberty to ſay, *Bleſſed be* God! *He giveth* me *the victory*; and I am ready, *whenever the Maſter of the houſe cometh*; *at even, or at midnight*; *or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning?* Mark xiii. 35. To help us in this inquiry, I propoſe to conſider, firſt, what preparation is abſolutely needful, that we may be ready to die? And ſecondly, to preſs an immediate attention to it from the reaſon given in the text; becauſe *in ſuch an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh.*

Firſt, I propoſe to conſider what preparation is abſolutely needful that we may be ready to die.

You well know that ſeveral perſons, in different places, have of late been ſuddenly called from among the living to mingle with the dead. Perhaps you cannot remember ſo many inſtances of ſudden death in ſo ſhort a time. Theſe are awful *comings* of the *Son of Man*; and the more ſo, becauſe ſudden death is too commonly unprepared death. And I hope they will at leaſt help to fix your attention to what I am about to offer from the word of God. The call of the word is now awfully ſeconded by that of Providence, and both together cry, *Prepare to meet your God.* Amos iv. Bear with me then, whilſt in love I uſe great

great plainneſs of ſpeech. Many of you, I fear, ſeldom think of this ſolemn meeting; at leaſt it never gave you much concern. Some, it may be, are already in poſſeſſion of what the world calls religion, and are therefore at eaſe about futurity, and conclude, that whenever your change comes, it will be well with you after death. But if you deſire, in earneſt, to be happy through eternity, be perſuaded to follow one direction, than which nothing can be more agreeable to right reaſon. Drop all your prejudices, whether contracted from education and cuſtom, or from churches and parties. Determine not this point by what is uſual among your neighbours, faſhionable in the world, and practiſed by men, who are all naturally corrupt, and all ſtand in need of the ſame divine teaching: (John vi. 44, 45.) but learn to be a Chriſtian by hearkening to the voice of CHRIST, and prepare to meet your GOD by the inſtruction graciouſly afforded you in his own infallible word. It is *a light which ſhineth in a dark place, to which you will do well to take heed:* for though the ſcriptures are *counted fooliſhneſs* by a *dark world*, they are nevertheleſs the *wiſdom of God*, and *are able to make you wiſe unto ſalvation through faith, which is in* CHRIST JESUS. 2 Pet. i. 19. 1. Cor. i. 18. 2. Tim. iii. 15.

As a neceſſary part of this preparation, let us enquire what knowledge have we attained to concerning ourſelves, concerning GOD, CHRIST, and the way of ſalvation; and what is our preſent character, practice and converſation? To know that we are men and must die,

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will avail little. To know that there is a God, a Saviour, a heaven, and a hell, and that we have souls which must dwell for ever in one, or other of those places, is not sufficient. Have we then ever learnt that we are sinners? Some, I suppose, are ready to answer, certainly, we well know that we are sinners. But then, I must ask again, were you ever deeply and powerfully affected with the dreadful meaning of that word, a Sinner, as signifying a fallen, unholy creature, who is an enemy to God, an object of his just indignation, a miserable wretch, who, in respect to himself and all human assistance, is without help and without hope? Supposing you are of those who shall be finally saved in Christ, here is your natural condition described by himself: *The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.* Luke xix. 10. Do you then indeed know that you are *lost* through original and actual sin, as partaking of a polluted nature, being *shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin*; as having *hearts full of corrupt and evil affections*, malignant passions and lusts,—*hearts deceitful above all things and desperately wicked?* Ps. li. Gen. viii. 21. Jer. xvii. 9. Measuring your actions and whole conduct by the standard of moral excellence and duty, the law of God, are you convinced that you have been *transgressors from the womb*, and have *gone astray like lost sheep*, and *been foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another*, as the scriptures declare? Is. liii. 6. Tit. iii. 3. And what are your apprehensions of the guilt and danger of sin? Do you think lightly of it, so as to live willingly

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in ſin without any concern, or terror? Do you ſee nothing criminal in a careleſs, irreligious, prayerleſs courſe of life; no guilt in conformity to this world, to the impious, filthy, vain and unprofitable diſcourſe, jeſtings and ſlanders of the men of it, with all its various flatteries, corruptions and luſts, while God is forgotten day by day, and His holy word and commandments defied and ſet at nought? Do you ſuppoſe, that theſe things, together with pride, envy, wrath, covetouſneſs, diſcontent, and other corrupt affections, are little noticed by God; or that in caſe He ſhould mark them, you can eaſily ſettle the affair of forgiveneſs with Him? Then it is plain you have not ſeen the evil of ſin; nor do you know that God whoſe Spirit indited the Scriptures. For *He is of purer eyes than to behold evil*; and has pronounced *the wages of ſin* (the due deſert of every ſin) to be *death*. He *abhorreth the covetous*; and *every one that is proud in heart is abomination to him*. He *will bring every ſecret thing into judgment*, call *men to account for every idle word*, and *render indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh upon every ſoul of man that doeth evil*. Hab. i. 13. Rom. vi. 23. ii. 8. Pſ. x. 3. Prov. xvi. 5. Eccl. xii. 14. Matt. xii. 36. Conſider therefore, my fellow-ſinners, whether you have learnt ſomething of the unſpeakable heinouſneſs of all ſin, as poſitively declared in the Scriptures, and in particular as amazingly demonſtrated by the ſtreaming blood and doleful groans of the Son of God, whoſe ſacrifice of Himſelf in body and ſoul for ſin is the only thing which purges away the guilt of it? Have you ſo far attained as to know that, whatever your

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moral character may be, you are *by nature a child of wrath, already condemned*; that you would have had no reason to charge God with unrighteousness, had He long ago appointed you an everlasting portion in hell; and that it is not possible you should have any other portion, if God should deal with you according to your deservings, or should you die in a *natural state?* Eph. ii. 3. John iii. 18, 36. Ps. cxliii. 2. If you are strangers to these things, you are not yet prepared to value any of the Gospel blessings and promises; for they are made to the *poor in spirit*, the *humble*, *meek*, and *self-abased*; to them that *mourn*, *are sick*, *labour* and are *heavy laden*; and consequently you have not even begun to *repent*. And can you be ready to meet *the Son of Man* without *repentance?* Surely, if you give any credit to scripture, you will allow that this is impossible, and that you must *repent*, or *perish*. Mat. v. 3, &c. ix. 12. xi. 28. Luke xiv. 11. xiii. 3.

The salvation of the Gospel is asserted to be of *grace*, and *not of works, lest any man should boast:* Eph. ii. By grace it was procured, and by grace it is applied, and we enabled to receive it. For if it were in any measure owing to works done by us, our deceitful hearts would so far take occasion to *boast*; and whenever we do so, we aim to rob God of that glory which belongs to Him alone. And therefore the Gospel cannot be embraced so as to make us ready for death and judgment 'till we are brought to *deny ourselves*; for God *resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.* James iv. 6. That pride which

which leads men to think well of themſelves, and palliate the guilt of ſin; and which fills them with vain imaginations of their own power to procure the favour of God, muſt be mortified and brought down, or the Goſpel will continue *hid from their eyes.* 2. Cor. iv. 3. Aſk yourſelves then, whether you have learnt that you are loſt, not only as condemned becauſe of *guilt*; but as helpleſs and unable to deliver yourſelves from the *power* of ſin, being abſolutely *without ſtrength, inſufficient of yourſelves to think any thing as of yourſelves*; and that you can neither repent, believe, or obey the Goſpel, except as you are taught by the SPIRIT of CHRIST and ſtrengthened by his grace? Rom. v. 6. 2. Cor. iii. 5. John xv. 5. vi. 65. In a word, are you convinced, that in order to ſerve GOD in holineſs here, and to enjoy him in glory hereafter, *you muſt be born again?* John iii. 7. Or will you venture to imagine that you may poſſibly be ſaved without regeneration, which is the new and heavenly birth of the ſoul? You may with equal reaſon command the heavens and the earth to paſs away, and expect them to obey you. Does Satan tempt you to let this doctrine alone, as if it concerned you not; or to join againſt it with a world, *lying in the wicked one*, and involved in guilt and darkneſs, who *cannot receive the ſpirit of truth, becauſe they know Him not?* John xiv. 17. Will you ſo far betray your infidelity, and enmity to God, as to treat this gracious change as a deluſion, or to ridicule it as enthuſiaſm, as many have blaſphemouſly done? I pray GOD in mercy to prevent it. But whatever of this kind you may be ſeduced to do, He that made and upholds

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all worlds and all creatures, He who knows and observes all that passes in the heart of man, and whose *word shall, in the last day, judge* all who *rejected* it here—He hath said, and will not go back, *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of* God. John xii. 48. iii. 3.

If struck with these positive declarations of God, you can so far honour Him as to believe their truth, and are disposed to inquire what you must do; then fly, in the name of Christ the Mediator, to a mercy seat, and pour out your souls before God who sitteth upon it, hearing prayer. *Ask, and it shall be given you, seek, and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you.* Mat. vii. 7. *Take with you words, and say,* Lord, *receive me graciously. Create in me a clean heart.* According to thy promise in the everlasting covenant of grace, and for Jesus' sake the Mediator of the covenant, *in whom the promises are all yea and amen, give me a new heart,* and *put thy Spirit within me. Take away the heart of stone,* and *give me a heart of flesh.* Teach me to *put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts*; and *renew me in the spirit of my mind,* that I may *put on the new man, which after* thee, O God, *is created in righteousness and true holiness.* Mercifully grant that I may be *born again,* and so *enter into the kingdom* of thy grace here, and be fitted for *the kingdom* of thy glory in the world to come. Hos. xiv. Ps. li. 10. Ezek. xxxvi. 26. 2. Cor. i. 20. Eph. iv. 22.

In case you admit the necessity of conversion, salvation by grace, and the sanctification of the Spirit, still,

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my friends, *examine yourſelves whether ye be in the faith; prove your ownſelves.* 2. Cor. xiii. 5. This point, whether ye be in the faith, or not, may be called the hinge on which your ſalvation, or everlaſting deſtruction turns. For the LORD hath ſaid, *He that believeth on me hath everlaſting life—He that believeth not ſhall be damned.* John vi. 47. Mark xvi. 16. And good and true is this and every word of the LORD. To know whether you be a believer, ſearch into the foundation and ground of your hope. Is it on account of any thing you have done, or can do? Is it partly founded on a ſuppoſition that there is ſome goodneſs in you, or your actions, which may recommend you to the divine favour, or help to do it in conjunction with the ſacrifice of CHRIST? It may be, you are ſtrict in the forms of religion, high in profeſſional knowledge, and your lives ſober, regular, and pious, compared with others. But is this the reaſon why you have hope in GOD! Is it in any meaſure the cauſe for which you expect to be accepted? Then here is awful proof that as yet you know not JESUS CHRIST; for they who know Him *count all things but loſs for the excellency of that knowledge; that they may win* CHRIST, *and be found in Him, not having their own righteouſneſs which is of the law; but that which is by the faith of* CHRIST. Phil. iii. Whereas you *are*, partly at leaſt, *righteous* in your own eſtimation; and therefore *not* yet effectually *called* by Him; for He came *not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance.* Mat ix. 13. You are deſperately ſeeking a juſtifying righteouſneſs by that holy law which curſes and condemns all who keep it not perfectly in thought,

word, and deed. Gal. iii. 10, 12. You are working for life by the law instead of believing the gospel. You are entangled in a similar error with the Jews the apostle speaks of, Rom. ix. 31, who though they *followed after the law of righteousness*, yet *attained not* to it. He asks *wherefore?* and gives this plain reason; *because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.* In so doing, you, like them, oppose the gospel, and are *the enemies of the cross.* You are in rebellion against CHRIST, and reflect on the wisdom of GOD in sending him, because through a self-sufficient spirit you reject the necessity of his death, obedience and grace, as the surety and head of the church; *for if righteousness* (to justify sinners) *come by the law* (our own personal obedience to it) *then* CHRIST *is dead in vain.* Gal. ii. 21.

The pride of man has so many shifts, windings and hiding places to keep it-self alive, and the heart, *deceitful above all things*, has recourse to such a variety of specious artifices in order to evade free justification by the imputed righteousness of another, that it is requisite to place the subject in different points of view, that men may be pressed to enter into the closest self-examination. If the question were, Whether notoriously impious and wicked persons; whether profane swearers, scoffers, adulterers, whoremongers, thieves, drunkards, liars, extortioners, revilers, covetous, &c. be ready to meet the Son of Man? We have a direct answer to the question; and most of you, I apprehend, know, that the scripture repeatedly assures you, in the plainest language, that *such*

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have no inheritance in the kingdom of God. 1. Cor. vi. 9. Gal. v. 19. Eph. v. 5. But suppose you reform your lives, leave off all your scandalous sins, and never commit them any more; which is your duty (and woe, increasing woe, will grow upon you, if you continue in sin), yet will this make amends for past transgressions? Were it possible for your future obedience to be perfect without the least sin; even in thought,—yet will this wipe out the fearful debt already entered against you, and cancel the *ten thousand talents* you owe to God? Heathens might dream of such an atonement; but men with the Bible in their hands should know better. And can you indeed be easy with the burden of that debt upon your conscience; and flatter yourselves into a state of peace and safety without any scriptural evidence that it is blotted out? O be convinced, that nothing can ever relieve you but the inconceivably precious ransom of God's providing; and that you can never obtain peace and liberty, except by quitting all the lying refuges of self-righteousness, and flying, as guilty criminals, for shelter to the blood and righteousness of Christ. It is *this blood* alone which *cleanseth from all sin*; and when received by faith *sprinkles the heart from an evil conscience*, and produces heavenly and abiding peace; for *being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our* Lord Jesus Christ. Job. xxxiii. 23. Heb. x. 22. Rom. v. 1. Here all the saints sought their purity when they prepared to meet God who is *glorious in holiness*. They all *washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb*. Would you therefore be accepted

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of Him as members of that Church which is his beloved bride, make *yourselves ready* with her. Get *arrayed* in that *fine linen, clean and white; which is the righteousness of saints.* Rev. xix. 7. If this mean, as I apprehend, our justifying righteousness, then it cannot be our own personal obedience, because *no man* by the latter can *be justified before* God; *for in many things we offend all.* Ps. cxliii. 2. James iii. 2. In ourselves, and compared with the divine law, *we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses as filthy rags.* Is. lxiv. 6. And therefore our justification before the infinitely holy God must wholly be by *that righteousness which* He has graciously *manifested without the law, even the righteousness of* God *which is by faith of* Jesus Christ *unto all and upon all them that believe.* Rom. iii. 21, 22. For it is *by the obedience of* one, that the *many*, who shall be saved, *are made* righteous. Rom. v. 19. Here the self-condemned and distressed soul may find *a hiding place from the wind and a covert from the tempest.* Here, and here only, we can obtain *everlasting consolation and a good hope through grace.* Being *clothed with* these *garments of salvation*, and *covered with* this *robe of righteousness* we may now *greatly rejoice in the* Lord, and *our souls may be joyful in our* God, whilst the presumptuous, self-righteous intruder will meet with a question he cannot answer: *Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment?* He is represented as *speechless*, whilst *the King says to his servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* Is. xxxii. 2. lxi. 10. 2. Thes. ii. 16. Mat. xxii. 12.

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In the next place it is of the utmoſt importance to inquire what influence theſe things have upon our hearts and lives, what ways and practices we are purſuing, and what is our character, daily conduct and behaviour; that we may know whether we have thoſe good works and fruits of holineſs, which proceed from God, and muſt form the evidences of our acceptance with Him, and our regeneration by his Spirit? For *in this the children of* God *are manifeſt, and the children of the devil: Whoſoever doeth not righteouſneſs is not of* God, *neither he that loveth not his brother.* 1. John iii. 10. Have we then continual reſpect to univerſal righteouſneſs? Are we careful to keep the garments of our outward converſation clean, or to *walk in all the commandments of the Lord blameleſs?* Does our knowledge of Christ lead us to look upon all ſin as an abominable and accurſed thing? As ſuch do we ſeparate from it, eſcape the pollutions of the world, and *hate even the garment ſpotted by the fleſh?* Jude 23. As we contract defilement, do we inſtantly and eagerly ſeek purification by flying in the exerciſe of faith and prayer to the *fountain which is opened for ſin and for uncleanneſs?* Zech. xiii. 1. Yet have we this teſtimony, that we contract none willingly and with approbation? For that would prove that *ſin* yet *reigns within us.* Rom. vi. 16. Do we receive the promiſes of the Goſpel in ſuch wiſe that we may love and obey its precepts? In our ſeveral ſtations and capacities, civil, domeſtic, and relative, have we the grace and fortitude to live and walk purely by the word of God; and while we *follow peace with all men*, yet follow no man any farther than

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we can with a good conſcience, in the fear of God, and with a view to His glory? In a word, let it be remembered, that *if we ſay we abide in* Christ, *we ought ourſelves alſo ſo to walk, even as He walked.* 1. John ii. 6. And thus we ſhall gain a full, bright and joyful teſtimony that *the Goſpel is* become *the power of* God *to ſalvation* to our ſouls, as it is *to every one that believeth.* Rom. i. 16.

But if this be the character and walk of the real Chriſtian; the path of duty, happineſs, ſafety, and preparation for death, then conſider how perilous and dreadful muſt be the caſe of ſuch among you as are now following the inclinations of your evil hearts, and *walking after the courſe of this world, the whole of which lieth in wickedneſs!* Eph. ii. 2. 1. John v. 19. In this courſe it is impoſſible you ſhould be ready to meet the Son of Man; for alas! you can have no love for God, and nothing but enmity againſt Him: for *if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him; and the carnal mind is enmity againſt* God. 1. John ii. 15. Rom. viii. 7. However you may ſtrive, and be tempted to deceive yourſelves into an imagination that your caſe is not ſo bad, yet nothing can be plainer than this truth,—that the world, and not God, is in all your thoughts. Your affections, deſires, pleaſures, cares, purſuits, labours are decidedly in favour of the world, and engroſſed by things below. Here is your *treaſure*, and of courſe here is your *heart*. Mat. vi. 21. You have indeed an immortal ſoul; but how is it cramped and chained down

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to earth and ſenſe! How does *Satan, who deceiveth the whole world*, prevail with you to love your fetters, and to lie quiet in them; and to put away the thoughts of God, your ſoul, and eternity while you are diverted by nothing but *a vain ſhew!* Rev. xii. 9. Pſ. xxxix. 6. O poor miſerable captives! what can you expect if the Son of Man ſhould come to require your ſouls while you are ſeeking *your good things* here? O what but the worldling's horrible portion as the Lord himſelf hath deſcribed it? *The rich man died, and was buried, and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments. For the wicked ſhall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget* God. Luke xvi. 23. Pſ. ix. 17.

Therefore to you, my beloved brethren, who have believed in God, and deſire to be his ſervants,—to you I ſay, beware of the love of the world; for this is directly oppoſite to the love of your heavenly Father, and will, at leaſt, mar your peace, comfort, and communion with Him, and all delight in heavenly things. Having *eſcaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the* Lord *and Saviour* Jesus Christ, take care that you be not *again entangled therein and overcome.* 2. Pet. ii. 20. Separate your hearts from the moſt deſirable of the world's enjoyments, and the moſt engaging of its objects. Let your regard even to lawful things be kept under and regulated ſo as not to hinder, but rather to ſubſerve and promote your ſpiritual improvement, and love to God. Suffer not Satan, *the god of this world* to cheat and befool you any more with *vanity and*

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vexation of spirit, lest when the Son of Man cometh, He should take you by surprize seeking your portion here instead of saying, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.* Ps. lxxiii. 25. Keep your souls then in constant readiness to meet Him; and with this view *seek those things which are above, where* CHRIST *sitteth on the right hand of* GOD. *Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with* CHRIST *in* GOD. And, *when* CHRIST, *who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.* Col. iii. Rest not in a speculative knowledge of CHRIST, and a notional acquaintance with gospel truths. Think not that you have attained 'till you indeed experience that CHRIST *is formed in you*, and you *have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.* For *if any man* be not *a new creature*, and *have not the* SPIRIT *of* CHRIST, *he is none of His.* Gal. iv. 19. Col. iii. 10. 2. Cor. v. 17. Rom. viii. 9. Now, in order to promote this *power of godliness* in our hearts and lives, we must by all means labour after a sense of that wonderful *love* of CHRIST to us *which passeth knowledge*, that we may feel the sweet transforming influence of it, and keep it alive in our souls. This will effectually *constrain us to live unto Him who died for us.* 2. Cor. v. 14. And let none think that a life thus devoted to GOD would disqualify them for a proper attendance to their worldly business. On the contrary, it is the only thing which can fit them for a faithful, diligent and conscientious discharge of it in all cases whatever. So that while

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their lawful worldly concerns are kept in their proper place, and made ſubſervient to the *one thing needful*, the love of CHRIST will influence, and an eye to the command and glory of GOD will accompany and direct them in all their undertakings.

But if you unhappily find, as is too often the caſe, that your love to GOD and delight in holineſs ſubſide and *are ready to die*, then take this advice: let nothing upon earth ſupply their place. Yield in no wiſe to ſpiritual ſloth, or to any of thoſe enticements which Satan will take the opportunity to offer. Reſt not 'till you have recovered the ſtrength you have loſt, and can again ſay with confidence, *My beloved is mine, and I am His.* Cant. ii. 16. And when you have regained his gracious preſence, hold him faſt, and ſhun the things which occaſioned his abſence and your diſtreſs. Remember you have no time at all to ſleep in a ſpiritual ſenſe. For you are in the midſt of enemies, either openly attacking you, or ſecretly contriving and attempting your ruin; and any remiſſneſs on your part would give them immediate advantage. But for your encouragement bear in mind, that however numerous, crafty and powerful your adverſaries are, yet you ſhall be *more than conquerors* by cleaving to *Him that loved you*; for *greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.* Rom. viii. 37. 1. John iv. 4. *The Eternal* GOD, who is a *ſure refuge* to all his people, is on your ſide, and He is your *ſtrength. Be ſtrong then in the* LORD, *and in the power of his might; and take to you the whole armour of* GOD, *that ye may be able to*

withſtand in the evil day, and having done all to ſtand. And the LORD *ſhall preſerve thee from all evil: He ſhall preſerve thy ſoul.* Deut. xxxiii. 27. Eph. vi. Pſ. xlvi. 1. cxxi. 7.

That you may be kept in readineſs for death, neglect none of the means which are appointed for your preſervation, ſupport and growth in grace, particularly thoſe to which our LORD here exhorts, *watching* and *prayer.* Luke xxi. 36. Watch as thoſe who are always liable to aſſaults, and who expect to be wounded, or thrown down, if you are ever off your guard. Watch over your *hearts*, and *keep them with all diligence*; *for out of them are the iſſues of life*; that you may reſiſt and overcome ſin in the firſt motions and riſings of it. Prov. iv. 23. Watch againſt the ſubtle devices of Satan, and all the inſinuating allurements of the world, that you may get the victory over them through faith. Intreat the LORD to *ſet a watch before your mouth*, and to *keep the door of your lips.* Pſ. cxli. 3. Abhor all indecent, corrupt and impious diſcourſe. Let not your ſpeech convey the deadly poiſon of falſehood, flattery and ſlander; nor be ever frothy and vain; but let it bear a ſweet ſavour of heavenly wiſdom, and *be good to the uſe of edifying, that it may miniſter grace to the hearers.* Eph. iv. 29. Watch over your whole conduct, that you may *cleanſe your way by taking heed thereto according to the word* of GOD. Pſ. cxix. 11. Search the ſcriptures with unremitting diligence, and be *ſwift to hear* them opened, *watching daily at wiſdom's gates*, that you may *drink of the wine which ſhe*

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hath mingled, the rich and chearing cordials of divine love and all ſpiritual bleſſings. James i. 19. Prov. viii. 34. ix. 2. Let your *delight be in the word of* Christ, and your *meditation therein day and night*, that it may *dwell in you richly in all wiſdom*. Pſ. i. 2. Col. iii. 16. Be thankful for theſe *lively oracles*, and pay them a diſtinguiſhing regard as flowing from God only wiſe, and as able to *build you up in your moſt holy faith*. Let all your watching be connected with prayer to the Father of lights and God of all grace. Make continual uſe of this precious privilege, in which you ſhall lay hold on the ſtrength of God, and be kept by his mighty power through faith unto ſalvation. And let me intreat you (as I greatly deſire and ſtand in need of your prayers) to make ſupplication for me, *that I may ſpeak the myſtery of the goſpel boldly as I ought to ſpeak*, and *not ſhun to declare the whole counſel of* God, that when called to give an account of my miniſtry I may be found *pure from the blood of all men*; and that now in my whole *converſation* I may walk *as becometh the goſpel*, and *adorn the doctrine of* God *my Saviour in all things*. Eph. vi. Acts xx. 26. Forget not the advantages of united vigilance and ſocial prayer; but watch for opportunities of meeting together with God's people for the ſake of ſpiritual improvement, that you may adviſe, exhort, reprove, pray for, and help and ſtrengthen one another; *and ſo much the more, as ye ſee the day approaching*. Heb. x. 25. Such meetings have moſt eminent marks of God's approbation, and ſpecial bleſſings are engaged to them both in the old and new Teſtament: The Lord himſelf aſſures

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us, that *where two, or three are gathered together in his name, there is He in the midst of them.* Mat. xviii. And He thus instructs us by one of His ancient prophets: *Then they that feared the* LORD *spake often one to another, and the* LORD *hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the* LORD, *and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the* LORD *of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.* Mal. iii. 16. Surely, my brethren, here is enough to induce us to meet together, and to speak often one to another, seeing that we shall enjoy the LORD's gracious presence which is better than life; and in the manifold changes and desolations of the world, in the hour of death, and *in the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men,* He will spare us as dear children, whom He *has purchased with his own blood,* and as jewels with which He adorns his mediatorial crown. These meetings, if prudently conducted, will also greatly tend to promote that *brotherly love,* by which *all shall know that we are Christ's disciples,* and we, in particular, may learn *that we are passed from death unto life.* John xiii. 35. 1. John iii. 14. Only let us take heed, that we *love, not in word only, but in deed and in truth.* If GOD has favoured us with wealth more than sufficient for our lawful necessities, let us not, with the children of this world, spend it upon our lusts, in vanity and voluptuousness; but as good stewards of the gifts of GOD, let us use them to the glory of the Giver, by supporting, as far as the nature of them will allow, every good cause, and by chearfully contributing,

buting, as we are enabled, to the wants of others, especially the followers of CHRIST, who are placed in poverty, not only for their own spiritual good, but for a trial to the faith and love of their richer brethren. Let us beware lest we be found *barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of the* LORD, and without those labours of love which must ascertain the sincerity of our faith even at the last day: For, *then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.* They had done all this to his afflicted and despised people for his name's sake; and He therefore esteems it as done to himself, they being *all one in Him*, and *members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the* LORD, *forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the* LORD. Mat. xxv. Gal. iii. 28. Eph. v. 30. 1. Cor. xv. 58.

Having considered what preparation is needful that we may be ready to die, I proceed secondly, to press an immediate attention to it from the reason given in the text; because in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.

You know not the time of your death. This often *comes upon men as a snare, and as a thief in the night.* Were you

you assured that a robber would attempt to break into your house, and did you know the hour, you would take care to strengthen yourself, and watch and be prepared against him. It is the allusion by which our LORD here teaches the necessity of a constant preparation for death. *Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your* LORD *doth come. But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.* As therefore we know not the time of death, and it may be near, to act with common prudence, we must always watch and be ready. Indeed you generally confess that life is a very uncertain thing. But why then will you presume upon it, and so live as if it were at your own disposal? What a perverse and inconsistent creature is man! How backward to profit by the most convincing truths, as bent, it should seem, on self-deceit and his own destruction! *Vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt.* Job. xi. 12. We have lately seen the vanity of life awfully enforced in the course of divine providence. Many have had their souls required in the most blooming and active stages of nature. One was buried here the week before last at the age of 19. But, blessed be GOD! there is reason to hope that he is now in Heaven; for he professed a conviction of his own sinful and lost estate, that his hopes were placed on JESUS CHRIST alone and his full salvation; and that he desired to depart, that he might be with and see his dear Redeemer. This I mention as affording matter of consolation to his friends, and of encourage-

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ment to young persons to pray, and seek God betimes. Many have also been hurried into the eternal world on a sudden, at an hour when they thought not. And it may fitly be asked, are these things nothing unto us who are yet in this dying life? Shall God *speak once, yea twice, but man perceive it not?* Job. xxxiii. 14. Shall saints and sinners be removed early and quickly, and none warned to their advantage? Sudden death is indeed sudden glory to them that are *ready:* but it should never be forgotten, that it is sudden hell to the *unconverted*; for, *Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven.* Luke xvi. 23. Mat. xviii. 3. Take care that ye be not offended at these sayings; but *let them sink down into your ears*, and ponder them in your hearts.

To help you yet farther in understanding your inexpressible danger while in an unconverted state, and to convince you that nothing should be desired by you so much as to be established in the faith of the Gospel, I have a few particulars to relate concerning our brother, who was interred here on Thursday last. And these things I mention, not to praise the dead,—a thing which he could in no wise have approved, being taught with all God's children to *abhor himself.* Job. xlii. 6. But I speak in order to praise God for the wonderful grace bestowed on him, and that hereby his living servants may be encouraged and quickened, and ungodly men warned to attend to religion. He was called away early in life, at the age of thirty-one, and in haste, as he took

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to his bed on Thurſday evening, and was a corpſe on the Lord's day morning following. But though his warning was ſhort, through ſovereign mercy he departed *with joy unſpeakable and full of glory.* The Lord gave him ſingular patience under his acute pains. He was preſerved from fretful murmurings and complaints, and favoured with a meek and calm acquieſcence in the divine will, which, with other graces, grew and prevailed more and more as his bodily ſtrength decayed through the rapid progreſs of the diſeaſe. I could never perceive, that he ſhewed any *fear* of death after his attack; but as ſoon as his trials came on derived immediate comfort and ſupport from thoſe truths to which God had before opened his heart*. Indeed at an early period of his confinement, I think it was the firſt viſit I made him on the occaſion, he obſerved, that the only deſire he had to live was that which Hezekiah expreſſed, that he might glorify God more upon earth. For, ſaid he, repeating thoſe words from Iſ. xxxviii. 18. *The grave cannot praiſe thee, death cannot celebrate thee,—the living, the living, he ſhall praiſe thee.* He longed, if God would grant a reprieve, to adorn the goſpel by a more watchful, circumſpect and univerſally holy converſation.

And is not here a voice ſpeaking to us, who *are* living? ſhall we diſregard the inſtruction now preſſed upon us; and

* The firſt abiding impreſſions which he had of religion began in the latter end of the ſummer 1790, when he kept an inn, which he left for conſcience ſake, and accepted of the office of Pariſh Clerk, I believe with a view to the glory of God.

and not rather resolve to do what we have reason to believe he would have done, had God prolonged his life? We, through the divine forbearance, have a present reprieve. Shall not as many of us then as fear God place death in view, and consider, that we may shortly go up to our beds to come no more down 'til' we are carried to our graves? Are we not therefore determined to shake off our spiritual sloth, our remissness in holy duties, and to beware of sinning against the light vouchsafed us, lest our faith and hope be darkened, when the master of the house shall come; for should he refuse his gracious presence and support, all that is most terrible will appear against us? What do ye say, ye living men? For my own part, I was led instantly to resolve, through divine grace, to be stricter than ever in duty, in striving against sin, and following after holiness The Lord help and give me strength so to do! I would place death always before me, that I may so live as men would wish to have lived when they come to die. Awake then ye that sleep! Let us up and be doing our appointed work while it is day. Now let us begin indeed to be alive to God, that we may *glorify our heavenly Father by bringing forth much fruit.* John xv. 8. Behold, my brethren, with what tender mercy He now spares us! Behold his unparallelled condescension in permitting vile worms and guilty rebels to glorify Him whose *glorious name is exalted above all blessing and praise.* Neh. ix. 5. And shall we suffer any thing beneath the sun to bereave us of this gracious and wonderful privilege? Have we yet learnt so little of the nothingness of this world as to

be still grasping at shadows, blinded by glittering dust, and captivated by passing vanity? Rather shall not each of us say,—Away with these bewitching,—these destructive trifles! Now I discern the *snare*; and blessed be God, it is *broken*, and I am *escaped*. *My soul, come no more into their secret*; but *turn to thy rest in* God. O God, *thou art my portion*; *my heart is fixed, my heart is fixed*; *I will walk before thee in the land of the living*. Ps. cxvi. &c. To strengthen us yet more in so reasonable a determination, let us call to mind our profession, faith, calling. We profess to be wholly and freely saved by a divine Saviour whom the world hated, despised, reviled, blasphemed, persecuted, murdered; that through his obedience, sufferings, agonies, blood, sacrifice, death, resurrection, intercession, and no other way, we have pardon, righteousness, grace, and eternal life. John xiv. 6. We believe also, that all who shall be saved are called here with an holy calling, being regenerated by the Eternal Spirit, who renews us in holiness after the image of our Creator. 2. Tim. i. 9. 2. Cor. iii. 18. If then there be any truth, or power in these things; *if any consolation in* Christ, *if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the* Spirit, *if any bowels and mercies*, let not this exhortation be spoken in vain. Phil. ii. 1.

The desire of being spared that we may live brighter examples of holiness, is not inconsistent with true, victorious faith. Who that knows any thing of the love of Christ does not regret, on a review, that he has done so little to manifest the power of it, and to testify his grati-

gratitude? Though our dear brother at first expressed a desire to live, if it were the LORD's gracious will, yet he was not left to doubt of his acceptance, or under any dread of his last enemy; but was enabled in a very remarkable manner to glorify GOD in his sickness and death. He had immediate recourse to those *scriptures* which he loved, and which *testify of* JESUS, and *were written, that we through patience and comfort of them might have hope.* Rom. xv. 4. He was excited to fervent prayer, and presently assured, that *where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.* Rom. v. 20. Amongst other petitions in my hearing, he used, as nearly as I can recollect, the following: "LORD, give me faith. LORD, "increase my faith. LORD, I believe; help thou my "unbelief. I want my JESUS. I want to embrace my "Saviour. Come, LORD JESUS, and take me into thine "arms. Restore to me a sense of thy favour. Re-"stamp thy holy image on my soul;" and more of a similar import. He wanted clear manifestations of the Redeemer's love and presence, with the renewing and comforting influences of the HOLY SPIRIT; and was answered in a manner wonderfully displaying the faithfulness, mercy and grace of the GOD who heareth prayer. This soon appeared to persons present, especially on the night preceding his decease; after a mortification had taken place, and death was expected to be at hand. The things which then passed between GOD and his soul were unutterable. He was filled with an exuberance of spiritual joy, divine love, and a longing for complete fruition, which nothing could interrupt. His faith was so

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lively and appropriating, his enjoyments so sensible, and heavenly things so present with him, that he seemed at times as if he began to walk by sight. He was ever engaged either in earnest prayer, or in deep, serene, and joyful contemplation, or at intervals in exhorting others to believe the gospel and serve God. Many of his expressions cannot be recollected; but a few which are well remembered I shall rehearse, that we may praise God on the account, and that all who know the Lord may be excited to *follow on to know Him.* Hos. vi. 3. I have taken particular care that I may repeat the very words which were spoken by him, in the same order in which they were delivered, and as confirmed by the agreement of several witnesses. To some friends who came into his room on the Saturday evening he said, "You little expected to see me alive now; and I thought to have seen my Saviour's face before." After lying silent for a while in one of his pleasing, contemplative frames, he told a friend, that he had been inquiring of the Lord, whether he had an interest in Christ? and, said he, "my pardon is sealed." He expressed a full assurance, that on the following day he should enter upon his everlasting sabbath. Some drink being offered him he said, "Do not give me any more of that; I drink of the living waters." He exhorted those who were present in these and many other words; "*Come ye to the waters,* and *buy without money and without price. Believe in the* Lord Jesus Christ, *and you shall be saved.* It is certainly true. O do not forget God; and He will not forget you." Is. lv. 1. Acts xvi. 31. He

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was often heard to repeat, "Bleſſed ſalvation! Come LORD JESUS, *come quickly*." Not dying ſo ſoon as he expected, he ſaid, "I hope I do not offend the LORD by not waiting his appointed time: He has withdrawn the blow a little longer for ſome wiſe purpoſe." And ſo it afterwards appeared. But we may from hence obſerve, that he was fearful leſt his very deſires for the immediate preſence of GOD ſhould make his reſignation to his will leſs entire than it ought to be; a certain mark both of a rational, clear underſtanding, and an enlightened and tender conſcience. And it is now time to inform you of what paſſed about a quarter of an hour before he expired in the morning. This will further confirm what was obſerved before, that his ſoul increaſed in ſpiritual ſtrength as his bodily powers failed; and that GOD reſerved the beſt wine, the choiceſt manifeſtations of his love to the laſt. After having remained ſome conſiderable time in a ſtate of ſweet, compoſed meditation and mental prayer, he ſtarted on a ſudden from that ſtate, feeling, as was ſuppoſed, the inſtant approach of death; and indeed he was thought to be dying before. But what pangs of death were theſe? How were they changed, as it were, into the new and tranſporting enjoyments of increaſing life and delights 'till then unknown! For as ſoon as, or before he began to ſpeak, he laughed, and continued to laugh, while the dying frame of his body ſhook and trembled with the overpowering abundance of his joy. There was ſomething ſo extraordinary in his whole appearance and manner of addreſs, that it baffles all the deſcriptive powers of language. In a tone of

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voice which was exceeding ſtrong, loud and animated, he cried out, "My dear friends, the friends of God, where are ye?" with ſome other words now forgotten. After they were come near, and he had obſerved that what God had revealed to him was unutterable, he exclaimed, "Is this dying? Where are the ſcoffers now?" Then, with great ſtrength of voice he bad them tell his dear wife to come inſtantly, that he might ſpeak to her. Somebody went and brought her up in haſte. The words which he ſpake to her contained a ſolemn and moſt important charge, and are highly deſerving of *your* regard. They were theſe: "*Believe on the* LORD JESUS CHRIST, and you ſhall follow me to that happineſs whither I am going. And *bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the* LORD." Mark xvi. 16. Eph. vi. 4. Then addreſſing his friends again, (and ſpeaking as was underſtood of the Goſpel ſalvation) he ſaid, "Remember I tell you it is true,—it is true. Go on,—purſue it. Where are the ſcoffers? Where are the deſpiſers now? Let them come and ſee how happy I am! Is this dying? Is this dying? O happy! happy! happy! happy*! It is finiſhed." Theſe were his laſt words, ſoon after which he ceaſed to live in the body.

And

* Here his ſpeech was aſtoniſhingly loud and animated, as if he wanted all the enemies of true religion to have heard him. And this had great weight in determining me to publiſh the account. As the deſpiſers could not be preſent to ſee how happy he was, let them hear at leaſt of what the LORD did for him. And may the GOD of all grace bleſs the narrative to their conviction, that they may ſeek and find the LORD, and be happy in time and eternity through the knowledge of JESUS CHRIST and his goſpel to the glory of his own name!

And now, my brethren, what ſhall we ſay to theſe things? I am perſuaded that you who fear the LORD will be ready to exclaim with me, *What has* GOD *wrought?* This ſhould indeed be remembered *to the praiſe of the glory of His grace*; for how wonderful is the power of it! How is his *ſtrength made perfect in* the extreme *weakneſs* of his ſervants! As to the oppoſers of vital godlineſs, I am aware in what way they are enticed, either by Satan, or their own ſelf-deceiving hearts to evade all arguments in ſupport of it. Yet for their ſakes, if haply *repentance may be given them*, it is proper to declare, that the deceaſed, in no part of his illneſs, ſhewed any ſigns of being what we commonly call light-headed; but had his rational faculties preſerved unclouded, or rather they were illuminated more and more to his very laſt words. What he ſpake was in the ſedate language of a ſound and ſober underſtanding; yet in the bold and nervous manner of a man who feels what he expreſſes, and has the fulleſt demonſtration of its reality. And I may challenge all the unbelievers in the world to account for ſuch a carriage and ſupport at ſuch a time on any principles except that of the intercourſe which the HOLY SPIRIT maintains with the ſoul of every real Chriſtian, and which the unregenerate too commonly deny, or it may be, deſpiſe.

Let us now endeavour to improve the ſubject by a word of exhortation ſuited to perſons of various deſcriptions. And firſt I ſhall ſpeak to you who openly declare for GOD and his ſervice, as being *delivered from the power*

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of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son, in whom you have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Col. i. 13. You have heard in what an extraordinary manner God was pleased to manifest his presence and confirm his word to your late friend; and how he was transported cross the black river of death under the clear shining of the Sun of Righteousness, and in the fulness of heavenly blessings, so that the *waterflood could not overflow him, nor the deep swallow him up.* Mal. iv. 2. Ps. lxix. 15. Take courage then, my brethren. Let the faithfulness of God quicken you in his ways, stir you up to unreserved obedience, and deliver you from all tormenting fears of death. And though we are not authorized to expect such uncommon manifestations before our departure, so as to laugh in the very dissolution of nature as our departed brother did; yet if we trust in and follow the Lord *in whom we have righteousness and strength,* He will surely be present to give us inward peace, and we shall meet death as a conquered enemy. *For this* God *is our* God *for ever and ever: He will be our guide even unto death. With Him there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning*; and He hath said to every member of the *true* church, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* Ps. xlviii. 14. Jas. i. 17. Heb. xiii. 5.

Be of good courage then ye faint hearted! Be comforted ye feeble minded souls! Ye men and women of a sorrowful spirit, lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees. O *lift up* your drooping

heads;

heads; for the *day of your* complete *redemption** *draweth nigh.* Come, *lean upon your beloved*, and say, *The* LORD *is my shepherd, I shall not want. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.* Cant. viii. 5. Ps. xxiii.

I am commissioned to say to all who call upon the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, *Watch and be ye ready.* Beware of sleeping; for this world is not your rest. Let your eye be directed to the heavenly country before you, your heart and conversation ever there, that as strangers you may pass the world, neither clogged with the business of it, nor captivated by any of its fading glories. Heb. xi. 14. Mat. vi. 21. Phil. iii. 20. Let nothing here divert you from that *way of righteousness in which there is life, and in the pathway whereof there is no death.* Pro. xii. 28. *Mortify all inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness which is adolatry.* Col. iii. Shun the immoderate gratification even of lawful appetites. *Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.* Luke xxi. 34. Keep it always in view that it may never take you by surprize. Awake then ye loitering servants; for behold, the Master cometh *in such an hour as ye think not. Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he*

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* Rom. viii. 23. Eph. i. 14.

will return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Bleſſed are thoſe ſervants whom the LORD, *when he cometh ſhall find watching.* Luke xii. 35. Let every one of you immediately aſk himſelf, am I ready? Hark! the trumpet of the goſpel keeps perpetually ſounding at the command of the Captain of the Lord's hoſt, charging you to the ſpiritual conflict. Up then in the name and ſtrength of the Redeemer, and take the field againſt the world, the fleſh and the devil. Arm yourſelves at all points and follow your Leader *without the camp bearing his* honourable and pleaſant *reproach.* Be on your guard againſt temptations to cowardice and deſertion, and ſay, *The* LORD *is my light and my ſalvation, whom ſhall I fear? The* LORD *is the ſtrength of my life, of whom ſhall I be afraid? Though an hoſt ſhould encamp againſt me, my heart ſhall not fear.* Pſ. xxvii. This is the genuine ſpirit of *a good ſoldier of* JESUS CHRIST: Thus *fight the good fight of faith,* and never give over as long as you are in the body, and all ſhall be well. *Be thou faithful unto death, and* He *will give thee a crown of life.* Rev. ii. 10.

The ſubject affords me occaſion to addreſs a few words to perſons in a wavering, or divided ſtate. I mean ſuch of you as have ſome convictions of ſin and of the truth of the ſcriptures, who at times are inclined to be religious, and almoſt determined to be ſo in reality, but nevertheleſs are prevented by the love of the world, the fear of man and the ſhame of the croſs. You are the heſitating *Agrippas,* the *almoſt Chriſtians.* O ye half-

reſolved

resolved, ye double-minded souls, *unstable in all your ways*, how long will ye halt between two opinions, as if you were ignorant which is the better part, and when the decision is of such amazing consequence? How long will you attempt to reconcile things of so irreconcileable a nature as light and darkness, CHRIST and Satan, the love of GOD and of the world. 2. Cor. vi. 14. How long I say will you halt? 'Till the Son of Man shall come, and time shall be no longer? GOD forbid! If the world can indeed soften your dying pillow, bring a sweet calm, a heavenly peace into your disconsolate and trembling soul in the pangs of dissolving nature, and confer upon you an everlasting inheritance, then love and follow the world still. But if it be the grossest folly to believe this, and none but GOD can do such things for you, then seek his favour in CHRIST, that you may cleave to and follow Him as long as you live, and enter into his joy when you die. Instead of shrinking from the cross, learn the usefulness and the necessity of it, and say, welcome any mortifications and trials; welcome any opposition, ridicule and shame, so that hereby I get divorced from sin and the world, and can decidedly say, *The* LORD *is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.* Ps. xvi. 5.

Nor must I forget you who so far forget yourselves as to be engrossed by the concerns of time, who live as thoughtless of GOD, of CHRIST, of your souls, and of the eternal world, as if these were all but *words and*

names,

names, or things which concerned you not. Acts xviii. 15. You are the self-important *Gallios*, the men of indifference about religion, who affect to leave it to weaker minds because you are more *sensibly* engaged. But behold how you are cheated, while striving to catch a shadow you lose the substance! For the religion you slight is the *one thing needful*; and the *world* you are pursuing *passeth away with the lusts thereof*. 1. Jo. ii. 17. O ye enslaved souls, who early and late are cumbered with the business and cares of this life, haste and settle your accounts, close your books, and put your whole house in order; for death is about to enter your doors at *an hour when you think not*. But how will you meet death when the great concerns of your souls, and the business of salvation, have never been attended to, or always postponed? Ah! what would have been your present state, had a late summons from the Son of Man been sent for you? How would your love of money and doting desires to amass wealth have left you the hopeless dupes of vanity and delusion! Luke xii. 20. Be warned then and start from your fond dreams; yea, *weep and howl for the miseries that shall* (otherwise) *come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver are cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire; ye have heaped treasure together for the last days*. Ja. v. 1. Pangs and torture they may bring you, but not one gleam of solid peace, or comfort in your departing hour. And supposing you could hug these darling idols even in your expiring moments, yet cannot

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ye carry them away with you, nor will they *profit in the day of wrath.* Prov. xi. 4. *Come down* then and *sit in the dust, strip,* and make yourselves *bare,*—I mean of your worldly affections, that you may at length fix your hearts on God all-sufficient, and seek *an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away reserved in heaven* for all his servants. 1. Pet. i. If this be not done before death, then the portion you covet in time must be changed for one in eternity *where the worm dieth not, and where the fire is not quenched.* Believe ye the *scriptures?* If you answer yes, then weigh the import of those words, James iv. 4, and consider whether they who depart the enemies of God can expect the enjoyments of His love: *Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with* God? *Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of* God.

Ye careless, dissipated souls, children of pleasure, gaiety and frolic, vainly elated with personal beauty, rashly confiding in youthful vigour, and madly intent on the gratification of your insatiable desires, there is something methinks in our present subject that might constrain even you to seriousness. Learn from late providential occurrences, that youth is not exempted from death, which comes upon men in *such an hour as they think not.* And learn from the word of God, that if you are called away in your career of luxury, dissipation, and sensual pleasures, you are *not ready:* for you *that live in pleasure are dead while you live.* 1. Tim. v. 6. Alive, it must be confessed, you are to the fluttering fashions and

vanities

vanities of the world: but you are dead to ſpiritual and divine things; dead to God the fountain of happineſs, and to communion with Him; dead to the excellencies of Christ, who is the *light and the life of men*; dead to the wiſdom and power of the glorious goſpel, to the beauties of holineſs, and all that future unſeen bleſſedneſs which faith even here ſubſtantiates. Nor is this the worſt of your caſe; for unleſs you are quickened here by the Spirit of life, and raiſed up from the death of ſin, you muſt needs be expoſed, beſides the diſſolution of your bodies, to a *ſecond death* inconceivably more dreadful than that, and which an inſpired Apoſtle aſſures you is *apart in the lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone*. Rom. viii. 2. Eph. ii. 1. Rev. xxi. 8. Come then and labour after an attainment which in the multitude of your gay purſuits has been forgotten, or undervalued, yet vaſtly more important than all, and many can ſay more delightful. Learn to ſeek God in daily, habitual and fervent prayer. Pray againſt the *madneſs* of your own *hearts*, and for the enlightening and renewing influences of the divine Spirit. Ecc. ix. 3. Luke ix. 13. Here is no room for trifling. Theſe are things of too ſerious a nature to be jeſted with,—too awful in their conſequences to be ſafely delayed; for *if you wait the grave is in your houſe; you make your bed in darkneſs*. Look a little forward, and you may *ſay to corruption, thou art my father; and to the worm, thou art my mother and my ſiſter*. Job. xvii. Dance then no longer in your chains, nor affect to be merry in your way to execution; but *be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned*

to

to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the LORD, *and He shall lift you up.* James iv. 9.

And where are those deluded persons who cast contempt upon the Gospel, treat the truths of GOD *only wise* as folly, and who hate and despise his ministers merely for speaking them? There is something in the last expressions of our departed brother calculated in a peculiar manner to shake and pierce them, however *hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.* "Where," said he with dying lips, "Where are the scoffers? Where are the despisers *now?* Let them come and see how *happy* I am." Ah! what a word is here for the opposers of religion! How awfully striking the warning it conveys! How evidently flowing from love to their precious souls, and a regard to their true welfare! O that GOD may graciously bless it to the conversion of many; that their hearts may be opened to receive the truth; and that they may come and learn to be happy in life, in death, and through eternity! Otherwise what will they do in the prospect of approaching death? Can they then *harden themselves against* GOD; or in so doing can they *prosper?* Job ix. 4. Now through the delusion of Satan they may be so far infatuated as to affect a little boldness: but *can their heart endure, or their hands be strong in the days when* GOD *shall deal with them?* Ezek. xxii. 14. Where then is the numerous tribe of Deists so *called*, the men who disbelieve the scriptures, have no love for them, and therefore neither search nor study them, and are at no pains to regulate their hearts and lives by their sacred form of doctrine? Where are the

the Arians and Socinians, the ſpecious advocates for ſelf-righteouſneſs and ſelf-ſufficiency? Where are all the enemies of the croſs, of free juſtification by faith and ſalvation through grace? Let them all come *near; produce their cauſe, and bring forth their ſtrong reaſons*; let them *take counſel together* and inquire, whether they have a God and Saviour who *delivers after this ſort*; and whether their hope and rejoicing in death be any thing like what we have witneſſed? If not, let them remain ſilent, ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of God, and with the modeſty of little children ſeek to learn the Goſpel at a throne of grace. Indeed if men believe not the ſcriptures, we cannot expect they will be perſuaded by the declarations of the dying, or even of the dead, could they riſe again and preach. Luke xvi. 31. But hoping that God, with whom all things are poſſible, may take away the hardneſs of their hearts, it may be argued in the preſent caſe, that the words of dying men are generally allowed to have weight. We give ſome credit to what a felon ſays at the place of execution, and have a charitable hope that he will not die with a lie upon his tongue. But when a Chriſtian, whoſe tenderneſs of conſcience in ſmaller matters, and whoſe fear of God were well known, avers at the awful hour of death the truth and power of things which he feels, and of which he has the fulleſt aſſurance, there remains not a ſingle reaſon for diſbelieving him. Let us then who believe beſeech God to turn the hearts of deſpiſers; and let us, as we are called to it, ſpeak openly and confidently that which we know. And let us not fear to be deſpiſed, nor ever ſhrink from

ſhame

ſhame and reproach for his ſake, who was rejected and deſpiſed, laughed to ſcorn and crucified for us.

I might take occaſion from the laſt words of the deceaſed to his wife to exhort parents to a *Chriſtian* education of their children; but as time will hardly permit, and I have lately preached twice on the ſubject, I ſhall ſay but little, though the duty is of vaſt and unſpeakable importance, in which light no doubt he ſaw it at that ſolemn ſeaſon. That they who have no fear of God ſhould entirely overlook, or omit it, is not ſurprizing. But alas! it muſt needs be remarked, that many are ſhamefully guilty in this reſpect whoſe profeſſion leads us to expect a better practice. Let all then who know God, pay any regard to his word, or feel any real love to their offspring, exert their utmoſt ability to make their children acquainted with the ſcriptures, to correct evil principles in them, and cultivate right ones, and to bring them to fear God and ſeek him in prayer as early as poſſible. Let men be aſhamed to make that ſlothful, Antinomian plea too often heard, when they excuſe their own remiſſneſs by obſerving that they have no power to bring their children up for God, becauſe they cannot give them grace. They are not perhaps aware, that as ſuch reaſoning is ſuffered to counteract the diligent uſe of means, the natural tendency of it is to prove a dreadful conſequence, that they are yet ſtrangers to true Goſpel faith, which by the promiſes leads to all obedience without exception. 2. Cor. vii. 1. Let religious parents aſſuredly expect, that while they

ſincerely obey the divine command their gracious LORD, *who giveth liberally to all who aſk*, will grant the promiſed aſſiſtance, and bleſs their humble and upright endeavours to glorify Him. In the firm belief of which and a dependance on Him, let them *train their children in the way they ſhould go, and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the* LORD. Prov. xxii. 6. Eph. vi. 4. Let this be the very firſt and chief object they have in view for their children, and their whole management of them have reſpect to it. To confine their education to mere human learning, to direct their attention chiefly to the purſuits and employments of time, or to labour principally to leave them a portion here, is to expoſe them in the midſt of temptations, ſnares and troubles without providing for their defence, and to leave them vanity and vexation of ſpirit. But to *nurture* them in the pomps, vanities and corruptions of the world, as is often done, is ſo far (ſhocking barbarity!) to offer them to Satan, and to bring them forward in that *broad road which leads to deſtruction.*

But it is time to conclude; though it may be expected that I ſhould add a word of conſolation to ſurviving relatives. May all whom it concerns be kind to the widow and fatherleſs children! May GOD be a father, CHRIST a huſband, the HOLY SPIRIT a ſanctifier and comforter to them all! I hope the dying words and ſolemn charge of the deceaſed to ſeveral of you in particular, will never be forgotten, or unobſerved; and that the things you have witneſſed will work in you not only

reſignation,

resignation, but thankfulness to God. You are not called to such a test of obedience as Abraham was, though he staggered not at the amazing command, well knowing in whom he had believed. Nor is your trial like that of thousands in the present day whose nearest relatives are removed by violent deaths, in various circumstances, and that perhaps without any well-grounded hope that their change is for the better. But you are called to resign a child, a husband, a father, a brother to the sovereign will of Almighty God, in a course of nature appointed by Him, into the arms of a loving Redeemer, in a way which makes the mighty power of his grace appear exceeding glorious, and which, we trust, will be blessed to comfort the hearts of many, and to strengthen the cause of true religion. Cease then from unavailing lamentations; repress those sorrows which natural affection would prolong, but which, in the present instance, are misplaced, and wipe away—may I not call them your offending tears? Sure I am that you have abundant reason to be thankful, and that the language of your hearts should be, *Great and marvellous are thy works*, LORD GOD *Almighty; just and true are thy ways thou King of Saints! Thy will be done! The* LORD *gave, and the* LORD *hath taken away; blessed be the name of the* LORD!

LAUGHTER

LAUGHTER in DEATH.

When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with ſinging. Pſalm cxxvi. 1, 2.

Bleſſed are ye that weep now; for ye ſhall laugh. Luke vi. 21.

I.

When from our dungeon's horrid thrall,
By ſin, the world and Satan bound,
We firſt ariſe through ſovereign grace,
And learn the Goſpel's joyful ſound,
'Tis ſuch a time of freedom, life and light,
We are with laughter fill'd, and all around is bright.

II.

But ſoon the day's o'ercaſt; (that we
May learn to live by faith alone)
The fleſh, though ſtruck with death, rebels,
And will no law but nature own.
Hell wakes its jealous powers, a cruel train,
And brings the world in arms; and we muſt weep again.

III.

Our holy laughter ebbs and flows,
And muſt 'till that kind hour ſhall come,
When Jesus ſends a friendly charge
To fetch the Heav'n-born ſpirit home.
Then oft He glorifies his grace anew,
And ſtays the wond'ring ſoul with a ſweet Piſgah view.

IV.

IV.

We look for groans; but laughter ſweet
And mighty joys his boſom ſwell.
And is this death? aloud he cries,
Feaſting on bliſs too great to tell.
Can this be dying? cries the aſtoniſh'd ſaint;
For he had trembled oft at death, and oft was faint.

V.

If this be dying, while from Heav'n
Tranſporting tides of glory roll,
Then welcome death the Chriſtian's friend!
O happy, happy, happy ſoul!
Ne'er didſt thou feel 'till now ſuch glorious grace:
A few ſoft ſtruggles more; then view thy Saviour's face.

VI.

Indeed when wretched worldlings die,
And ceaſe to groan with dire diſeaſe,
The graceleſs vulgar ſtill will cry,
"Happy is this poor ſoul's releaſe."
O blind to Heav'nly truth! They who expire,
Not born again of God, wake in eternal fire.*

VII.

Can pride, by God and all his hoſt
Abhorr'd, amongſt them rear its head?
Can luſt of pleaſure, pomp and pelf
Round the Almighty's throne be fed?
Can envy, hate, all tempers fell and baſe
Mix with adoring love, and ſhock ſeraphic peace?

VIII.

* John iii. 3. with Mat. xxv. 41.

VIII.

Can ſuch as loathe his image here,
And view his meek ones with diſdain,
Savour their holy worſhip there,
And join the grace-exalting train?
No; grace muſt here produce a Heav'nly mind,
And work the death of ſin, or you no Heav'n can find.

IX.

Annihilation! cheerleſs ſound!
It is the Atheiſt's wild reſource,
When conſcience with unwelcome creed
Falls into fits of keen remorſe.
Fain for a brute's repoſe that creed he'd ſell;
Yet death muſt ope his eyes, and teach him what is hell.†

X.

Where are the ſcoffers? let them come
And ſee the joyful ſaint expire.
Where are the whole ſelf-righteous throng?
Let them without delay inquire
If ought but grace ſuch ſtrange ſupport can bring?
Then bow the rebel heart, and kiſs the Saviour King.

XI.

Ye trembling ſouls, who oft with fear
Look forward to a dying hour,
Why dread a foe your LORD has ſlain?
Why doubt his never-failing pow'r?
This God is yours, through life and death your guide;
Supplies at every need his goodneſs will provide.

XII.

† Luke xvi. 23.

XII.

So truſt his pow'r that you may now
Be quicken'd in his holy ways,
As pilgrims paſs this reſtleſs world
Careful alone his name to praiſe.
Give Him his own who bought you with his blood;
Be pure in heart and life the blameleſs ſons of God.

XIII.

Ye ſlothful ſervants who preſume
To wanton in unholy eaſe,
Ah! ſee, ye drink the deadly bane
Mix'd by the foe your life to ſeize!
Your lawleſs joys are ſprings of woful tears
To ſteep the couch of death, and ſink the ſoul in fears.

XIV.

Come, gird your loins and trim your lamps,
Nor dare a moment's ſpace to ſleep:
The Maſter comes; in wakeful pray'r
And faith your holy ſtation keep.
Then death, to careleſs men ſo big with woe,
Shall prove your ſmiling guide to joys which ever flow.

XV.

O bleſt indeed without alloy
Are all the Lord's redeemed dead!
Their warfare, pain and toil are paſt,
All trials, tears and dangers fled.
Satan and ſin no more can mar their peace
And ſcoffing tongues their gall and helliſh rancour ceaſe.

XVI.

XVI.

In Heav'n that Glorious Form they view,
Once marr'd for them and laugh'd to ſcorn;
But now far brighter than the ſun,
Star of the reſurrection morn.
And when the approaching trump the world ſhall ſhake,
In glory like his own their ſleeping duſt ſhall wake.

The END.

GLORY BE TO GOD ON HIGH!